

Seattle Police Email Community Newsletter

March 16, 2012



Dear Community Friends,

Residential Burglary Trend

In a previous newsletter, we told you about the trend of young women increasingly being involved in burglary, either as the lookout, or as the person who knocks on the door to see if anyone answers, and then signaling to the rest of the burglary crew whether or not it's "safe" to continue with the burglary.

We've also noticed repeat burglaries at the same address. We've noted cases where a home has been burglarized and some time later the same home is burglarized again. This could be because of burglars waiting for the homeowners to replace the items that were stolen and then going back to steal those items as well, or the burglar came back to get items not taken during the first burglary. Regardless, burglars found what they considered an easy target, and unless the residents take steps to make their home more secure, that home will continue to be an easy target.

What You As Residents Can Do

To combat the repeats burglary trend, our primary recommendation is to take the steps necessary to enhance your home security.

- Start by closing and locking all doors and windows when you are away from home, even for short periods of time.
- Prune back shrubbery to reduce any hiding spots that might make it possible for a burglar to try to gain entry through a door or window without being seen.
- Ensure you have dead bolt locks on all exterior doors and 3"-4" long screws in the strike plates of your locks. The longer screws make it more difficult to force open a properly locked door when the deadbolt is engaged.
- Use dowels or Charlie bars for sliding glass windows or doors.
- Secure tools and ladders so they can't be used to gain entry to your home or the home of a neighbor.
- Know to know your neighbors. The more you know who your neighbors are, the better able you are to identify those individuals who do not live in your neighborhood.
- Be attentive to what is going on. If you see something or someone that seems out of place or suspicious, do not hesitate to call 911 and each other. If you see something, say something.

Home and Business Security Assessments

Your Crime Prevention Coordinators provide free home and business security assessments. If you are interested in having us evaluate your home or business to provide recommendations for security improvement, please contact us.

- North Precinct: Terrie Johnston (206) 684-7711, terrie.johnston@seattle.gov
- West & East Precincts: Francisco Tello (206) 684-4730, francisco.tello@seattle.gov
- South & Southwest Precincts: Mark Solomon (206) 386-9766, mark.solomon@seattle.gov

Street Robbery Update

The spike of street robberies that we were seeing primarily in the South Precinct area in the latter part of 2011 seems to have peaked. The number of street robberies has declined. Some of this decrease is the result of great police work on the part of our officers and detectives in identifying suspects and making solid arrests. Those successes, however, are due in large part to timely reporting of the crime and good suspect descriptions by folks in the community. For this, we thank you!

Even though the numbers of robberies have decreased, robberies still occur throughout Seattle. Our December 6, 2011 newsletter provides great detail regarding Personal Safety and Robbery Prevention and response measures. Some of the key points are reprinted here.

- Scan your surroundings and make eye contact with people, not to stare them down, but to let them know that you are aware of them and acknowledge their presence. This sends the message that you not only know they are there, but you can also identify them if necessary.
- Walk confidently. Project an assertive, business-like image.

- Avoid walking or jogging alone at night. As much as possible, walk or travel with a friend, even during the daytime. Stay on paths that are well lit where you can easily see and be seen.
- Follow your intuition. Pay close attention to the uncomfortable feelings that often warn us of potential danger. "Trust Your Gut." If you feel that a situation is not right, move out of the situation. Trusting your own instincts that a situation feels "wrong" can be the best personal safety tool you have. Don't be afraid to cross the street, change directions, return to a business, or ask for help based on that "funny feeling;" you may be right.
- If you are being followed, or you see a person or group that makes you feel uncomfortable, give yourself permission to act; cross the street, walk in another direction, go in to a business, or ask other people walking if you may walk a short distance with them.
- Always dress so that your movements are not restricted. Wear clothing and shoes that allow you to move freely and quickly.
- Carry your valuables safely. Don't display items (e.g., iPods, iPhones, cash), when walking to and from your destination. Don't use or flash valuables like laptops, iPods, iPads or iPhones on the bus or train.
- If someone demands your property and displays or implies in any way that they have a weapon, don't resist. Physical property isn't worth getting injured or killed over.

Community Walks

The Seattle Police Department and the South Seattle Crime Prevention Council have been sponsoring community safety walks in a number of South Precinct neighborhoods. As neighbors walk together, they send a strong message of unity and that crime - and the conditions that foster crime - will not be tolerated. These walks bring neighbors together to identify public safety issues in their neighborhoods, such as street light outages, areas with poor visibility for pedestrians, broken sidewalks, graffiti, etc. Neighbors from New Holly, Lockmore, North Rainier, Beacon Hill, Rainier Beach and Columbia City have all conducted safety walks in their communities and have been joined by neighbors from other communities. Some neighborhoods, such as Highland Park/White Center, have upcoming walks scheduled, while others, such as Georgetown, are in the planning stages. For more information about these community safety walks, please contact the South Seattle Crime Prevention Council at sscpc@hotmail.com. If you are interested in participating in a community walk, or want to plan one for your area, we can be of service to you and can connect you with those community groups that are leading these efforts. Some of those groups are listed in the following section.

Community Partners

There are a number of great community based organizations with whom the Seattle Police Department partners, not only for the above mentioned safety walks, but for other community crime prevention and crime response activities. In addition to the various neighborhood councils, individual block watches, chambers of commerce and merchant associations, we encourage community members to get involved to the extent that you can, with the groups in your community. While not an exhaustive list, we want to recognize some of our community partners in East, South, and Southwest Precincts (and I apologize up front for any I miss; no offense is intended).

- The East Precinct Advisory Council (www.eastpac.org)
- The Georgetown Community Council (<http://www.georgetownneighborhood.com/>)
- Lockmore Neighborhood (<http://www.lockmore.org/blog/>)
- New Holly Neighbors Traffic and Safety Committee (newhollyneighbors@yahoo.com)
- New Rainier Vista Traffic and Safety Committee (trafficsafety@newrainiervista.com)
- The North Beacon Hill Council (<http://north-beacon-hill.blogspot.com/>)
- The Rainier Beach Empowerment Coalition (<http://www.rbcoalition.org/>)
- Seattle Neighborhood Group (<http://www.sngi.org/welcome/index.php>)
- The South Park Neighborhood Association (<http://www.allaboutsouthpark.com>)
- The South Seattle Crime Prevention Council (sscpc@hotmail.com)
- The West Seattle Block Watch Captains Network (<http://wsblockwatchnet.wordpress.com/>)
- The West Seattle Crime Prevention Council (<http://wscpc.blogspot.com/>)

Thank you for all you do for your neighborhoods. Until next time, Take Care and Stay Safe!

Mark Solomon, Crime Prevention Coordinator, mark.solomon@seattle.gov, 206.386.9766